

What is Your Intention?

Meaningful Score Study and Conducting



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What do you *wish* for?

I wish my students would play more _____.

I wish that my ensembles were more _____.

I wish that my rehearsals were more _____.

I wish I had more score-study skills in the following areas _____.

I wish my conducting showed more _____.

Where are you now and where do you want to be? _____.

How do we get there from here?

VISUALIZE IT HAPPENING...

Find clarity in your **intent and purpose**.

THE POWER OF INTENTION

Intention puts our mind into a positive mindset and a state of **anticipation**. We begin to visualize the outcome and see it happen before it does. This is similar to how an athlete visualizes a race, a competition, or a performance before the event. Visualizing what we want and truly believing that it can happen is how we blueprint the path for action.

What is Your **Intention** for Repertoire Selection?

- Why choose a piece?
- Is there purpose, depth, or meaning in the piece?
- What does the piece offer to the students, to the audience, or to the process?
- Are you exposing your students to a variety of composers across gender and ethnic groups?
- Does the piece elevate the students' artistically and musically?
- Does the piece teach about various cultures, ethnicities, or history?

Approaching Score Study with Intent and Purpose

- Score study is a means to discover, unveil, and reveal the depths, inspiration, and intent of the composer. The more we discover in the score, the more we have to give our students. The more we study, the more we will hear in rehearsals.
- Set your intention before you begin. Be in the now, the present, and completely focused on the task at hand. Put away distractions and have the tools of study available.
- Be vulnerable and open to the emotions, feelings, and inspiration that the repertoire may evoke.
- Breathe in gratitude for the opportunity study music before beginning your study. Tranquil, focused score study will generate deeper results.

Growth Mindset Score Study

Imagine the sound of the group that you want to have, not necessarily the sound of your group presently. There is no limit on the potential of your students. Visualize the tone of the Chicago Symphony and the clarity and intonation of St. Martin in the Fields.

What is the *intent* of the composer?

- Ask them.
- Program notes.
- Find out all you can about the composer and other works they have composed.
- Discover the intent through the study of the score.

The written note is like a strait jacket, whereas music, like life itself is constant movement, continuous spontaneity, free from any restrictions. – Pablo Casals

Tools for Intentional Score Study

- Erasable, colored pencils.
- Pencil
- Sticky notes
- Metronome
- Piano/keyboard
- Instrument or instruments
- Teaching Music Through Performance and other resources
- Recordings
- Consider enlarging score to make it easier to read and write in.

Score Markings

- Use erasable colored pencils to make markings in the score. Here are some suggestions:
 - Red** – forte dynamics, accents, and crescendos
 - Orange** – mezzo forte dynamics
 - Blue** – piano dynamics and diminuendos
 - Green** – tempo markings, rallentandos, accelerandos, and percussion cues
 - Yellow** – written text, such as “mutes in.”
 - Purple** – instrument cues.
 - Black** – meter changes
- Regular Pencil – harmonic analysis, phrasal analysis, rehearsal notes.

Write emotions, images, stories at the top of the score pages.

- **Phrasal Analysis.** Divide phrases into 2 bar, 3 bar, 4 bar, or 5 bar groupings.

2 bars: 

3 bars: 

4 bars: 

5 bars: Combine the 2 bar and 3 bar groupings or.....

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Go beyond the notes and rhythms to find the expression

- Form
- Phrasing
- Articulations
- Balance
- Melody
- Harmony
- Internal motor
- Tempo/Time.
- Colors
- Clarity
- Blend
- Countermelody
- Harmonic movement
- Dynamics

Strategies for *intentional* score study

- Start at the macro-level. Skim through the score to take in and be aware of the big picture. Read program notes. Instrumentation. What do you notice? What jumps out at you?
- Recordings. Listen to many recordings. Find quality performances on YouTube.
- Don't get locked in to a particular interpretation so that you can create your own and make your own decisions.
- Study the score with the metronome on and set to the marked tempos.
- Write ideas, questions, notes to follow up on, rehearsal plans, etc. on sticky notes in score that can be removed when tended to.
- Harmonic Analysis. Combination of Jazz Chord analysis, i.e. Cm7, and Roman Numeral, depending on function.
- Internalize the music through playing lines on the piano. Sing one line and play other lines on the piano. Solfege the melodies and use the piano to check for pitch accuracy.
- Play individual lines on your primary instrument. This improves your transposition skills!
- Focus on one thing at a time.
- Get physically involved with the score study. Gesture, move, and dance while singing lines. Emote! Tap into the feeling and the E-Motion of the piece.

Make Value Judgments and Decisions about the Score

- Spend time thinking about and making decisions about blending colors of instruments during score study prior to the first rehearsal.
- Make decisions on the direction of the line and the phraseology of the piece prior to the first rehearsal.
- Note grouping: upbeats lead to downbeats. Short notes lead to long notes. Low leads to high and high leads to low.
- Back off of long notes. Bring out the moving lines. Strive to create clarity in your mind for balance, blend and between melody, countermelody, accompaniment, groove, and percussion.
- Create visual images. Think in terms of metaphors, analogies, and stories. Tell a musical story. Paint a picture.

- Anticipate intonation challenges and intonation tendencies of instruments. Mark the score for how chords will need to be adjusted for just intonation. Lower the major 3rd 14 cents, raise the minor 3rd 16 cents, raise the fifth 2 cents.
- Allow your intuition and innate musicianship to guide your decisions through singing and playing parts of the score.
- Think of questions you can ask the players to engage them in the creation of the interpretation.
- Score study is a matter of discovery, understanding, curiosity, and internalization of the work. Make the work your own as if it is your creation.

Gesture, Movement, and Conducting with Intention

- Practice the art of mime. Move how one moves in real life. Lift as if it is heavy in forte or for a crescendo. Dance in the air as if it is as light as a feather.
- Get kinesthetically and viscerally involved with levels of strength and power in the music.
- Consider marking time to the music, particularly with mixed meters. Dance.
- Practice gestures at half-time in front of mirror.
- In legato music, lead with the wrist to create resistance and thickness. The music is in the space between the notes. Think of dark chocolate and sea salt. Gooey.
- The importance of the breath and the upbeat – determines the sound and quality of the downbeat. Show the music before it happens.
- The gesture of syncopation to show articulation, entrances, and dynamics off of the beat.
- Hear the music in your head while conducting. Audiate. Break it into smaller chunks that you can hear in detail.
- Free yourself up to be expressive and show the line, direction, and “rainbows” in the music.
- Energize the tip of the baton. Radiate the energy and emotion of the music in your body, face, eyes, and baton.
- Where your heart goes, energy flows.
- The eyes are the window to the soul.

Conductors need to become the music. Even the quality and volume of your voice, and the patterns of your speech have to match what is going on in the music – Jerry Junkin

- Read the program notes to your students.
- Make personal connections to the music.
- Make the music relevant to the students.
- Integrate art, dance, movement, history, culture into the rehearsal.
- Invite students to be involved in the decision-making and artistic process.
- Focus on the inner voices and the motor as opposed to obsessing over just the melody.
- Give responsibility for keeping time to the students so that you can focus on expression.
- Empower the ensemble to be in charge of the pulse.
- When cueing, invite rather than point.
- Sensitize your ensemble to your expressive conducting, particularly rubato and rallentandos.
- Conduct smaller when the ensemble is dragging. Draw attention to you.
- Vary the size of your gestures. Large does not equal forte. Intense and small can also be forte.
- Ask soloists to perform above the written dynamic.
- Divide the band up in chamber groups to rehearse the music.
- Rehearse in a circle.
- Rehearse without a conductor.
- Have the students stand and mark time while singing or playing their music
- Ask students to show the phrase shape in the air with gestures.
- Teach students the dance that the music is based on, if applicable.
- Teach students the words to the song, if applicable.
- Ask students to write about how the piece impacts them emotionally or visually.

When we are *intentional* about how we prepare, conduct, rehearse and teach, music education transforms and elevates the lives of our students.

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel. – Maya Angelou

Upbeat!

Mindset, Mindfulness, and Leadership in Music Education and Beyond

Matthew Arau

Just as a conductor's preparatory "upbeat" gesture at the beginning of a performance influences the way an ensemble plays, we too get to choose our "upbeat"—our thoughts and attitudes—at the start of each day, at the beginning of each class, and in our interactions with students and colleagues.

With this clever premise at its core, *Upbeat!* presents a winning combination of mindset and mindfulness strategies as well as leadership principles that will motivate, inspire, and transform not only your internal world but the culture of your music program.

Divided into three parts—Ignite, Inspire, and Lead—*Upbeat!* takes readers on a journey from internal self-reflection to outward expressions of leadership, with chapters addressing such topics as:

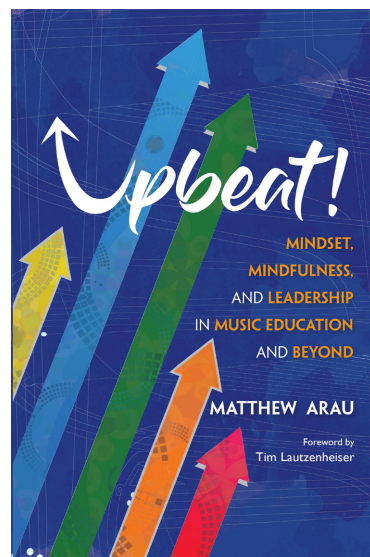
- Self-care for optimal mental, emotional, and physical wellness
- The transformative power of positivity and gratitude
- Growth mindset
- Mindful breathing and listening in an ensemble setting
- Fostering a culture of excellence and connection
- Creating vision and mission statements for your organization
- The essential qualities of an effective leader
- How to develop a thriving student leadership program

As the conductors and composers of our own lives, we can choose to live an "upbeat" life from a posture of gratitude, positivity, and enthusiasm. As a result, we experience greater fulfillment and achieve personal and professional goals. Students also benefit from the clarity of our example as they embark on their own leadership journeys.

With immediately applicable ideas and strategies that work for students, teachers, and professionals in any field, *Upbeat!* affirms the importance of living and working with intentionality and establishes that what we do, why we do it, and how we do it matters.

Dr. Matthew Arau, founder of Upbeat Global and Upbeat! Leadership Workshops, Coaching, and Keynotes, is an Associate Professor of Music and the Chair of the Music Education Department and the Symphonic Band Conductor at the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music in Appleton, Wisconsin. Dr. Arau has guest conducted and presented on student leadership, mindfulness, growth mindset, rehearsal techniques, and creating positive cultures in person in more than thirty-five states and four continents. Learn more about Dr. Arau at www.upbeatglobal.com.

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